Finding Queer Street:
The Representation of Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century Literature

Research Thesis

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by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the polarized treatment of sexuality from the beginning to the end of the nineteenth century through the works of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.* By examining the exclusion of normal roles of women and the homosexual undertones present within these novels, we may begin to broaden our understanding of sexuality and its role in the nineteenth century, particularly in Britain.

My approach to analyzing these texts is integrally tied to the context of the culture that produced it. Fully understanding history, philosophy, and politics gives my research a unique perspective to the literary decisions made in Mary Shelley and Robert Louis Stevenson's works. By juxtaposing the works of both these authors, this interdisciplinary research investigates how sexuality was coded and ultimately, how writing has shaped the political, familial, and socio-identities of that time period.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

> "Sexual unspeakability does not function simply as a collection of prohibitions in Victorian writers. Rather, it affords them abundant opportunities to develop elaborate discourse—richly ambiguous, subtly coded, prolix and polyvalent—that we now recognize and designate by the very term *literary*. Like other restrictions upon expression, the conventions of sexual unspeakability serve writers as a productive constraint, contributing to a certain historical formation of the literary. Literature in turn supplies a culturally privileged repository for the production, and recognition, of sexuality as unspeakable."
>
> William A. Cohen, *Sex Scandal: Private Parts of Victorian Fiction*[1]

INTRODUCTION

Set against a grainy black screen, the silent film adaptation of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1920) introduces Henry Jekyll as an idealist and philanthropist who cares for the poor in his free clinic and spends his days experimenting in the lab. When helping a beggarly woman and her family, Jekyll seems chivalrous and masculine, heroically swooping into the scene with a shining face and aristocratic appearance that contrasts starkly with the desolate background and deep, dirty gray of the woman's face. He is pictured as physically superior to the woman, positioned over her as she stares up at him with desperation, establishing the power balance between men and women, the rich and poor.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1920), Paramont

A little over ten years later, James Whale's 1931 *Frankenstein* pictures Dr. Frankenstein and his stout assistant Fritz, a character not present in the original novel, as toiling over the creation of their scientific handiwork. Famously, Dr. Frankenstein dramatically cries out during the creature's animation, "It's alive! It's alive!" In this version, Frankenstein is actually a doctor, but in the novel, he leaves university before he completes his degree in order to pursue

[1] Cohen 3.

his scientific ambitions. There are marked differences between Mary Shelley's Victor Frankenstein and James Whale's Henry Frankenstein: Dr. Frankenstein is sociable and incorporates an audience for his experiments, eliminating any need for there to be a personal motive or homosexual interest between Frankenstein and his creation. These filmic re-tellings, along with subsequent adaptations, follow a heterosexual agenda that omits details, invents love interests or cast characters differently in order to dissuade from the sexual tension present in the original readings of the gothic novels *Frankenstein* (1821) and *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886).

In fact, these adaptations purposefully construe certain relationships in a particular way and remove any sexual politics found within the novels, causing me to wonder about the discomfort caused by the issues of sexuality and masculinity found within Shelley's and Stevenson's works. Careful reading of these novels reveals that any references to sexuality are nowhere, yet everywhere at once. In this thesis, I want to ask two questions: is it possible to reconcile the male and female with sexualized freedom under the standards of the nineteenth century? And as a corollary to that, how has repressed sexuality skewed the behavior of society? By analyzing the construction of gender built into Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, this thesis examines the negative implications of perpetuating a sexually oppressive society.

This brings us to question: why this particular pairing of these two novels? An important aspect of my research is that I'm comparing works from two different literary historical eras: the Romantic and Victorian. This juxtaposition gives my research the opportunity to examine the treatment of sexuality over the course of the nineteenth century by looking at the exclusion of

"normal"[2] roles of women and the homosexual undertones present in Shelley's and Stevenson's novels. Both authors create textual worlds where masculinity and science trump the importance of women; they do not directly deal with the issue of sexuality, instead manifesting any repressed emotions in the protagonists' "monstrous" invention or alter-egos. These novels are the foundation for my thesis's evaluation of how nineteenth-century literature reflected the Romantic and Victorian attitudes towards sexuality.

Furthermore, there seems to be an inconsistency between sexual ideology and behavior, between what people ought to do and what people do. Charles Rosenberg notes that a "paradox" exists among these gender roles because there was a certain amount of "inconsistency between a growing ideological discountenance of sexuality, an increasing and reciprocal emphasis upon the ideal of domesticity and a behavioral reality which included prostitution, illegitimacy, birth control and abortion" (144). This "inconsistency" allowed for sex and sexuality to be considered as an integral part of one's body and identity, rather than merely as a vice and moral hazard. However, there was still a lot of work to be done: the conflict between what was considered socially-sanctioned sexual conduct and the actual sexual practices of the time resulted in the systematic distortion and repression of the sexual impulse.

History proves that sexuality was not always regarded so shamefully. For example, ancient Mesopotamian civilizations believed that their revered goddess of love and war, Inanna-Istar, empowered women through sexuality and fertility. As pictured in remnants of their sculptures and figurines of mortal women and female deities, there was a heavy emphasis placed on key features such as women's breasts, buttocks, and hips. Moving forward into the seventeenth century, sexuality was treated quite frankly, claims scholar Michael Foucault in his

[2] The term "normal," as it refers to conforming to a type or standard, is a Victorian invention, implying that there is a "normal" way for people to interact and behave.

novel *History of Sexuality: Volume I.* While most of the eighteenth and nineteenth century dictated that sexuality be "carefully confined" and "moved into the home," the seventeenth century had been a "time of direct gestures, shameless discourse, and open transgressions, when anatomies were shown and intermingled at will" (Foucault 3). Over the course of the nineteenth century, there was a dramatic shift in how sexuality was coded. Foucault, a French philosopher and social theorist, counters that sexuality has not always been repressed in Western society, but that a fixation to create a "discourse" surrounding sexuality emerged after the seventeenth century, thereby making it an unmentionable topic:

> Toward the beginning of the eighteenth century, there emerged a political, economic, and technical incitement to talk about sex […] This need to take sex "into account," to pronounce a discourse on sex that would not derive from morality alone but from rationality as well, was sufficiently new that at first it wondered at itself and sought apologies for its own existence. How could a discourse based on reason speak like *that*? (Foucault 23)

This focus on rationality within the Age of Reason gave way to the Romantic period and its ideals. Ironically, Romanticism has little to do with romantic love, instead referring to the reaction against the traditional systems of thought and a "fundamental change in how people of Western civilization [considered] themselves and the world" (Melani). Changes in society, beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing into our own timeline, underlie the Romantic Movement. European standards were breaking down on several levels, from changing familial values and the rise of feminism to the effects of new science and scientific discoveries. Eastern philosophies and beliefs began to pervade the Western front, thus introducing an array of new ideologies, including Romanticism, which would inspire a political and philosophical movement

towards emotion rather than reason, rebellion over acceptance. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, one of the major figures of Romanticism, utilized the term "intellectual intuition" as a way to describe imagination and the attempt to "reconcile differences and opposites in the world of appearance" (Melani).

Romantic writers took a serious interest in human consciousness, sexuality, and freedom of thought. Shelley's novel was conceived and published during a time period when women had limited legal rights. Similarly to her contemporaries, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley is preoccupied with this time period's politics and aesthetics, along with ongoing social upheavals and revolutions. Mary Shelley's love of reading and intellectual development stemmed from her father William Godwin and her access to his extensive library, but she was undoubtedly impacted by her philosophical and literary interactions with William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, Percy Shelley, and Lord Byron, as seen in the explicit references to their writings in *Frankenstein.* For example, the following excerpt from Samuel Coleridge's poem *The Ancient Mariner* appears in the novel after Victor has created his monster, revealing how heavily influenced the writing of the young Mary Godwin was by these philosophical and literary ponderings between her father and his visitors:

> Like one who, on a lonely road,
> Doth walk in fear and dread,
> And, having once turned round, walks on,
> And turns no more his head;
> Because he knows a frightful fiend
> Doth close behind him tread. (lines 447-452 quoted in *Frankenstein*)

Inspired by elements of the Gothic novel and the literary and scientific innovations of her day, Shelley produces the narrative of Victor Frankenstein and his exploration of the boundaries of human science. In the summer of 1816, Mary Shelley's "waking dream" roused her to write a ghost story that would "speak to the mysterious fears of our nature, […] curdle the blood and quicken the beatings of the heart" (Shelley 167). Although this ghost story was created by the daughter of the feminist author of *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, it lacked any strong female characters, instead focusing on a male-dominated cast. Moreover, the novel does not contribute supple analysis of the female experience, instead portraying female characters that are unable to affect the plot, but are always affected by it.

Similarly to how Mary Shelley conceived *Frankenstein*, Robert Louis Stevenson claimed that the idea of *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* came to him in a dream (Stevenson 14). In only a few days, he had finished the first full draft. Stevenson's tale centers on the tumultuous relationship between Dr. Henry Jekyll and his unsightly counterpart Mr. Hyde. The narrative follows Mr. Utterson as he embarks upon a frightening hunt to uncover the mystery of the elusive Mr. Hyde. True to Victorian form, the macabre themes of violence and duality suggest that this short novel extends beyond a simple story of good versus evil. In fact, the unclear descriptions of Mr. Jekyll's transformation, Hyde's appearance, and the close male relationships indicate that there is a strong case for homosexual and autosexual subtexts. *Strange Case* demonstrates a fear of evolving gender roles and the consequences of repressed sexuality as sexual categories and women were becoming more liberated during this time period (Showalter (105). Stevenson addresses the shifting paradigm in traditional gender roles within his novella by exploring how the fear of monstrosity is shaped by cultural perceptions.

Among the literary criticism and scholarship on each of these texts, some critics argue for the underlying presence of homosexuality within both works. However, most of these readings analyze them as separate entities, preferring to compare the beginning and end of the nineteenth century to modern works, rather than to each other. According to scholar Michael Eberle-Sinatra, "homosexuality, masturbation and narcissistic love in *Frankenstein* are not hard to come by," especially when the original reading is being paralleled with other versions of the novel (187). My research is different from existing criticism of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Frankenstein* because I will be juxtaposing an unusual pair of texts from two different parts of the nineteenth century as a way to gauge how the treatment of sexuality and gender pervaded the literature of that time period. Although I will be mentioning modern adaptations as a way to explore how the filmmakers attempt to address the incoherent representations of sexuality and gender within Shelley's and Stevenson's novels, my thesis will primarily focus on the texts themselves.

Eve Sedgwick in *Between Men: English Literature and Homosexual Desire* establishes the theoretical framework that "sexuality" and "desire" are social constructs, making men and women products of a patriarchal society over which they have no control. Sedgwick popularized the term "homosociality," a concept which I utilize to describe the social bonds between Frankenstein and his male companions and the different male-male relationships in Stevenson's novella. She shows us that it is easier to recognize female bonds on a continuum of homosocial to homosexual, but she focuses on heterosexuality and homosexuality within male bonds as a way to critique how this dichotomy fuels institutionalized homophobia. From this, her work utilizes homosociality to analyze the complexity of sexuality and power found within nineteenth-century texts, arguing that the oppressive effects on women and men were perpetuated by a cultural system where male-male desire was directed into a love triangle involving nonexistent

desire towards a woman. In my thesis, I differ from Sedgwick's theory of a power struggle between women and men by asking, what happens when women aren't present in these relationships? Or, can women's presence be felt through their absence? As seen in Stevenson's work, women are noticeably absent while the novella focuses on the male relationships, trying to avoid the discomfort of men forming intimate relationships with one another rather than with women.

Similarly, Elaine Showalter also analyzes Dr. Jekyll's transformation into Mr. Hyde as a literary creation of his repressed homosexuality, recognizing it "as a story about men." By studying artwork, media, and literature from the end of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, she shows how ambiguous representations of masculinity and femininity were perceived as a threat to social and familial stability. While she discusses sexual revolution and sexual epidemics as they relate to the entire era of the nineteenth century, she is mostly focusing her textual analyses on works from the end of the century. Showalter primarily concentrates on later interpretations of Stevenson's novella, particularly the filmic versions, as a way to compare similarities between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I employ Showalter's theories of "sexual anarchy," but I take my analysis of Stevenson's novel further by devoting more of my analysis to the text itself, rather than to Stevenson's personal life. I investigate the language, historical context, and subtext of Stevenson's novel in order to uncover the implications behind his skewed portrayal of gender. I plan to offer a new angle on the homosexual component of Stevenson's novels by considering it alongside *Frankenstein*, a contemporaneous piece of work, and then gain insight into the differing perspectives of a wholly patriarchal society, separately and together.

Finally, I found Anne Mellor's discussion of female identity in *Mary Shelley: Her Life, Her Fiction, Her Monsters* to be an invaluable resource to my research, especially when trying to address the question of authorial intent and how much of the sexual politics in *Frankenstein* Mary Shelley deliberately meant to include. Her study alternates between biography and literary criticism, providing me with an extensive amount of background research on Mary Shelley's life, relationships, and personal tragedies. The heart of Mellor's study concentrates on Shelley's writing career and how her ongoing "search for a family" shapes Shelley's works, reflecting her growing discontent with the attitudes of a patriarchal society and her subsequent "support [for] a feminist position which argues that female culture is morally superior to male culture" (116). My thesis challenges Mellor's assertion that Shelley's work was a psychological reflection of her anxieties of motherhood by resituating it as a critique of female idealization and women's function within society.

The issue of sexuality has maintained an implicit, yet persistent presence within nineteenth-century British literature, existing in the spaces between the texts as these writers and poets attempt to grapple with the changing meanings of sexual identity in "an age where sexuality, let alone sexual difference, is not yet fully understood" (Yeager 260). Even then, the social context of the nineteenth century was dictated by obscurity and would not allow the forthright articulation of sexuality. In the next two chapters, I will address the portrayal of women and homosexuality within Stevenson and Shelley's novel, beginning with the historical context of each and moving into their respective representations within each novel. This thesis culminates with an exploration of how gender is shaped by cultural attitudes, as illustrated by the oppression of sexual identity found in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. By examining the self-destructing

relationship of Victor Frankenstein and Henry Jekyll with their respective “monstrous” creations, this thesis seeks to reveal the complexities of a society which represses sexual expression.

CHAPTER 1.1 WOMEN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The revolutionary fervor of the nineteenth century undermined long-established notions towards both gender and sexual roles, revealing a growing concern and need for the redefinition of social categories, sexual identities, and gender relationships. Up until the nineteenth century, the subjection of women had been an inherent part of the social and legal canons, owing in part to the prevalent theory that men and women were believed to be physically and mentally built for different tasks. Joan Perkin, author of *Women and Marriage in the Nineteenth Century*, attributes the status of women as being reflected, rather than caused by laws that had been shaped by over nine hundred years of English politics and customs.[3] As a result of being considered the weaker, less capable counterpart, women were prescribed to certain roles within society under the careful protection of some man, usually father or husband. While some women, depending upon their social standing, were able to maneuver around the tight confines of matrimony, women of most classes had limited legal rights, provoking many to fight against the patriarchal system for women's equality.

As quoted by Perkin, Sir William Blackstone in *Commentaries on the Laws of England* stated that the law was "for [women's] protection and benefit, so great a favourite is the female sex in the laws of England" (1). This meant there was no room for individuality in a marriage—in the case of women at least—and it was for a woman's own good. Perkin calls the nineteenth-century woman "a feme covert," or a hidden person, implying that upon marrying her betrothed, she was "sunk into and merged with the personality of her husband" (2). While there were some benefits to this system, such as sharing any debts (even those contracted before marriage) or

[3] In Joan Perkin's reading, nineteenth century Common Law "was based upon the physical and political reality that, after the Norman Conquest even more than before, men controlled the resources of society. Things had not always been so starkly inequitable. […] It was the full imposition of feudalism by the Normans, based on military service by male barons and knights, which destroyed the legal rights of women" (1).

guaranteed economical support (as long as they share a bed and board), married women were essentially left as submissive beings under the wing of a man. The mentality of "feme covert" was embraced by women and men alike, even as emancipation became a theoretical possibility. So many conservative wives rejected the ideas of their radical sisters, "loving their chains" as Perkin describes, because they preferred the subordination of marriage over the daunting reality of single-hood.

However, the rise of industrialization challenged the conventional ideas of a woman's place, fueling the increasing demand for the same basic rights that men were afforded. Although women in Britain were not given the right to vote until the early twentieth century, the Industrial Revolution resulted in placing thousands of lower-class women outside of the home to work in the service industries and factories. While England had experienced a flux of economic power and prosperity, it had also produced slums and rampant poverty that resulted in families doing whatever was necessary to survive, including breaching the traditionally segregated spheres of domestic and public. According to Charles Upchurch in his novel *Before Wilde: Britain in an Age of Reform*:

> In an age of rapid economic change and severe limits on labor organizations, a family's economic situation could deteriorate rapidly for reasons beyond its control. Although workers clubbed together in friendly societies and other self-financed insurance programs to insulate their families from shocks in a laissez-faire economy, the most pervasive survival strategy was to employ the labor of wives and children. (Upchurch 22)

In spite of this forward momentum towards gender equality, married life for women was still based upon unequal terms, especially depending upon their social class. Under this system, the

institution of marriage still reflected the suppression of women as a means of perpetuating the continued dominance of men, despite the passage of laws favoring married women's rights. With the enactment of the Married Women's Property Act in 1856, women were given control over the income they brought into a marriage, but they were still extended far fewer privileges, leaving them subject to the authority of their husband. The concept of chastity, meaning pure or virginal, manifested itself in the objectification of women as property, upheld by both cultural principles and legal law. These laws endorsed male supremacy; the strict regulation of women's behavior ultimately ensued that a man's livelihood will be inherited by legitimate children, placing great importance on maintaining a family's lineage. If a married woman was adulterous, her husband could be responsible for raising another man's child. In fact, under British law any children born in a marriage were legally the father's, adding to the fear of unchaste wives.

Not only were women expected to be chaste, but feminist Anne Mellor argues that they were expected to be "obsessed with their personal appearance, with beauty and fashion" rather than be intelligent, rational beings (36). In eighteenth-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile* (1762), he suggests that women should be educated, but only so in the shadow of men: "[T]he whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honored by them, to educate them when young, to care for them when grown, to council them, to console them, and to make life agreeable and sweet to them" (Mellor 45). As Mary Wollenstonecraft's contemporary, Rousseau was respected for his social, political, and educational beliefs, but his gendered doctrine which describes the "ideal woman" essentially strips women of their humanity and calls for women to enslave themselves to their men. Women are encouraged to be superficial and delicate; they flirt and tease men for various reasons, but are forbidden from fulfilling any of these sexual fantasies in

order to maintain some semblance of modesty. A woman was expected to be a virgin upon marrying and produce an heir or two for her husband, but any scandalous affairs on her husband's part were smoothed over and ignored.

According to Mary Wollenstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, the ideal marriage is between two equal partners; it's based upon sensibility and compatibility, not sexual desire or passion. In fact, Wollenstonecraft classifies this is as "rational love" and articulates that women should repress any erotic desires in order to uphold a lasting relationship with a man (Mellor 34). In *Frankenstein,* Mary Shelley articulates the importance of maintaining a domestic family, like her mother, but does not employ strong female characters to represent this. Instead, she purposefully excludes or minimizes the role of women and describes to the reader the consequences of usurping the biological function of women in exchange for an exclusively male society.

"How can I, then a young girl, came to think of, and dilate upon, so very hideous an idea?"

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*[4]

1.2 Shelley and the Women of Frankenstein

In the nineteenth century, there was an unspoken hierarchy between men and women that was reflected by the gendering of public and private spheres of society; the private and domestic being feminine while the public and scientific was masculine. As a result of this sexual segregation, the men in *Frankenstein* are the doers while women are spectators that are dependent upon the protection of their male counterparts. Mary Shelley chooses to privilege the male experience while her female characters have little impact on the narrative, providing her with the literary vehicle to explore her own criticisms of prevailing gender roles and beliefs of the Romantic era.

Although the relationship of Mary Shelley and her husband Percy Shelley was founded on their shared love of writing and intellectual conversations, their marriage was not exempt from the effects of chauvinism. Mellor states that Percy never actually valued Mary's "literary talent or efforts as equal to his, a fact that would have significant repercussions on the revisions of *Frankenstein*" (23). Mellor points out that neither Percy *or* Mary considered her work to be equivalent to his, setting the tone for a "hierarchical relationship" that would not only be reflected in the portrayal of women in *Frankenstein*, but would dictate who holds the power in their relationship; who is the teacher and who is the student, who is privileged to speak and who is not. Mary Shelley's writing implicitly criticizes the cultural biases towards women by depicting them as passive, disposable, and sexless creatures. The females are prescribed to the domestic realm, performing their duties as mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters without the slightest indication of discontent for the inequities that shape their lives.

[4] Shelley 195.

Frankenstein is comprised of women who suffer calmly then expire, as seen with Caroline Beaufort, a self-sacrificing mother who dies taking care of her adopted daughter. In the 1831 version of *Frankenstein*, Caroline embodies the picturesque female when she "resigns [herself] cheerfully to death," but she has been like this ever since Victor can recall, first being a dutiful daughter then a weak, submissive wife (Shelley 40). Initially possessing a "mind of uncommon mould," Caroline's mental and physical health deteriorates with the death of her father (28). From the outset of the novel, Shelley depicts women as wholly dependent upon their male companions and ill-equipped to deal with any hardship on their own. Victor's father, Alphonse's, first impression of Caroline is when he sees her "weeping bitterly" by Beaufort's coffin and subsequently feels compelled to nurture her "weakened frame" (29), as if she is his charge and not his grieving wife. While it is the nineteenth-century husband's obligation to care for his wife, Alphonse resembles more of a father figure than spouse, treating her like a small child as he yields to her every whim and tries to "shelter her, as a fair exotic is sheltered by the gardener, from every rougher wind" (29).

To explain for the women who thrived under the domination of their husbands, Perkin attributes this outlook to the fact that there was not "one true position of wives, but as many as there were different women with individual characters, and different husbands to take advantage of or complacently ignore the law" (4). Alphonse's sympathetic disposition toward and respect for the importance of the family causes him to "relinquish all of his public functions" in order to tend to his wife and educate the children, a quality that is absent from Victor. This explicit reversal and overlap of private and public duties is downplayed in the first edition of the novel (1818), instead summarizing Alphonse's sentimentality towards his wife and family as being

"occupied by the duties of his new situation" (19). With the revisions of the 1831 version, Shelley fleshes out her critique of the female as the powerless and inadequate half of a whole.

Like Caroline, her adopted daughter Elizabeth is described as a docile, gentle character from the beginning; she is considered to be a "blessing" (Shelley 31) by Beaufort, exemplifying all the traits of ideal womanhood. Frankenstein cherishes her kindness and physical beauty; he frequently recalls her attractive qualities, as "none could behold her without looking on her as of a distinct species, a being heaven-sent" (30). Referring back to Rousseau's proposal of the "idealized" woman, all the females of Shelley's novel are idealized in some way: capable of self-sacrifice and nurturing instincts; possessing high morals, beautiful appearances, and the delicacy of taste and temperament. However, these women seem to be little more than property, as suggested by Victor when he admits that he considered Elizabeth to be a "possession of my own" (31). Again, he reiterates his possession of Elizabeth by confiding that "till death she was to be mine only" (32), implying that she is insignificant to the narrative outside of her attachment to Frankenstein. Just as Elizabeth is viewed a possession, Caroline is pictured as a "poor girl who committed herself" (28) to the care of her husband, thus reinforcing how women allow themselves to be subjugated, or to be "pretty present[s]" as referenced by Caroline when "giving" Elizabeth to Victor (31).

The women in Shelley's novel thus serve as a channel of action for their male counterparts. According to Vanessa Dickerson in "The Ghost of a Self: Female Identity in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*," Shelley's women are meek and superfluous, so "devoid of impurity, flaw and will, that they hardly seem important or visible" (Dickerson 82). These over-simplistic representations cast women in a static, unflattering light, but why would Mary Shelley, daughter of one of the leading feminists, choose to do this? I would argue that she specifically portrays her

female characters in such a way to mirror what English women have become in the system in which they exist: ethereal, expendable creatures. Shelley's statement is clear: she utilizes Victor's scientific endeavor as a means to eliminate the need for women, then proceeds to wreak havoc upon her characters; she shows us the ramifications of a "social construction of gender which values men over women" (Mellor 115).

When the creature's first victim, Justine Moritz, is falsely condemned for William Frankenstein's murder, she exhibits the type of female passivity that is littered throughout the novel. Justine is described by Shelley as "frank-hearted and happy" and liked for her "softness and winning mildness" (63) but lacks the empowerment and self-preservation to save herself. Justine's dilemma is a direct result of the sexualized feud between the creature and Frankenstein. After the creature ends William's life, he finds Justine Moritz sleeping in a secluded barn and plots to frame her for his murderous act by leaving William's locket in the folds of her dress. At the thought of her awakening and rejecting him, the creature is reminded of his abandonment and becomes "consumed by a burning passion which [Frankenstein] alone can gratify" (143). This burning passion and sexual deprivation leads to William's death, a violent event described by Shelley in provocative and erotic language. The creature seeks to "create desolation" and prove his enemy is not "invulnerable" (141) and he utilizes Justine as a means to achieve this vindictive scheme, knowing that he is sentencing her to death and she will be helpless to change her fate.

Even with being wrongly accused of manslaughter, Justine is the submissive, docile victim of circumstance: she says of the evidence used against her, "I have no power of explaining it […] I am only left to conjecture concerning the probabilities by which it might have been placed in my pocket" (Shelley 66). In fact, Dickerson goes as far to juxtapose the themes in Shelley's novel to Wollenstonecraft in *The Wrongs of Women*, claiming that these women

embody the feminine ideal—beautiful, obedient, nurturing, gentle, selfless, sexless—for the purpose of showing how dangerous it can be: "In Shelley's novel, […] an even more poignant and ghoulish representation and hideous expression of the wrongs of women is the female herself, so materially and politically erased from the text that she is invisible, if not nullified" (Dickerson 82). Justine's unjust fate epitomizes the state of the Frankenstein women; she lacks any agency and cannot overcome societal expectations, even in the face of death, in order to save herself. All the Frankenstein women are helpless to defend Justine and depend upon Victor to "find some means to justify [their] poor guiltless Justine" (Shelley 79).

Embedded in the novel's conception of social justice, exemplified by Justine ("justice") and later seen with the De Lacey's, is Shelley's attack against the oppressive nature of the patriarchal political system. Elizabeth's outburst after Justine's trial not only reveals her contempt towards capital punishment, but that she is aware of society's inequities, one ruled by men:

> I hate its shows and mockeries! when one creature is murdered, another is immediately deprived of life in a slow torturing manner; then the executioners, their hands yet reeking with the blood of innocence, believe they have done a great deed. They call this *retribution*. […] I [wish] I were in peace with my aunt and my lovely William, escaped from a world which is hateful to me, and the visages of men which I abhor. (Shelley, 1818; pg. 58)

This is one the few instances that we see Elizabeth challenge the feminine ideal and speak her mind, provoked by the flaws of a justice system that cannot protect an innocent woman from being framed for murder. Elizabeth argues that she would prefer death over living in a "hateful," oppressive world, but Justine steers the conversation away from Elizabeth's anger, preferring to

"cheerfully" (Shelley 87) accept her position and repress these sentiments. Justine, along with the other female characters, has become the quintessential ghoulish being, "suspended in a shadow realm of powerlessness and potential power that ultimately skews their identity" (Dickerson 80). Although Justine's fate functions as an instrument of psychological strain for Victor, the fact remains that he withheld crucial information which could have acquitted Justine from her fatal end.

Frankenstein's decision to choose death over life "capsulizes and punctuates the condition and fate of Caroline and Elizabeth who nurture unto death" (Dickerson 85). Caroline represents the sexless, chaste wife; Elizabeth, the moral beacon and devoted, patient fiancée. However, both also symbolize the congruous relationship between death and sexuality, illustrating the outcomes of a culture that represses the sexual urge. After the creation of his creature, Frankenstein dreams about holding Elizabeth and kissing her in a street, until he realizes that her lips have become "livid with the hue of death" and she transforms into his deceased mother, wrapped in her shroud and swarmed with grave-worms (Shelley 56). This is the only sexual interaction that we see Frankenstein have with a woman and their kiss ends with her death, suggesting Frankenstein's fear of female sexuality.

After animation, the creature follows Frankenstein into his bed-chamber, pulling aside the curtain in an eerie, perverse fashion as watched his creator sleep. Frankenstein's interaction with the creature occurs in his bedroom, a space associated with sexual pursuits, further emphasizing the erotic implications of their relationship. Not only does Frankenstein's nightmare culminate with him embracing his dead mother, but his reality becomes hellish as he awakens to find the creature looming over him. Looking into the creature's sexualized gaze, Frankenstein is completely frightened by the product of his egotism and narcissistic desires that were reflected in

the creature's fixed stare. Shelley purposefully juxtaposes Frankenstein's nightmare with the creature in his bedroom in order to illustrate Frankenstein's disconnect from women and establish the creature's presence as both monstrous and sexual.

In this context, the murder of Elizabeth becomes relevant because it exemplifies the destruction of women, intertwining death and love, death and the erotic, and death and women. After destroying the creature's female companion, Frankenstein is given a menacing threat: "I shall be with you on your wedding-night" (Shelley 167). As promised, the creature penetrates the newlywed's bedroom and takes Elizabeth's life as a form of revenge. Frankenstein finds her body, " lifeless and inanimate, thrown across the bed, her head hanging down, and her pale and distorted features half covering her face" (193). Elizabeth's murder occurs in their wedding bed, her brutalized body being the consequence of the creature's lust for violence and Frankenstein's anxieties of procreation. In fact, once he knows that there is no possibility that they can consummate their marriage, only then does he "embrace her with ardour" because "the deathly languor and coldness of the limbs told me, that what I know held in my arms had ceased to be the Elizabeth whom I had loved and cherished" (Shelley 193). With the erotic overtones of the creature's construction and presence, Frankenstein's passion to both destroy and control female sexuality is physically manifested, causing the monster to become an object of simultaneous desire and revulsion.

Although both Caroline and Elizabeth die for different reasons, they "may all be collapsed into one, so similar and interconnected are they" (Dickerson 85). When considering the female characters of Shelley's novel, the reason they are able to be "collapsed into one" is that they possess the same function within the novel, which is to further the storyline between Frankenstein, Walton, and the monster. Eve Sedgwick attributes this idea of sameness to the idea

that "the ultimate function of women is to be conduits of homosocial desire between men" (99). In Shelley's introduction to the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, she states that "many and long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley to which I was a devout but nearly silent listener" (168). Like Walton and Frankenstein, Percy Shelley and Lord Byron only expressed their affections towards each other in an intellectual capacity; they were so inspired by each other's knowledge and opinions that they couldn't help but to exclude Mary Shelley from their conversations, especially since their topics ranged over traditionally masculine topics. Not only does this suggest that Shelley paralleled these homosocial observations within her novel, but she writes that she was a "nearly silent listener," a passive member of the intellectual conversation.

Shelley picturing her characters as heavily romanticized, flat characters is hardly the outcry for women's equality that her mother calls for in *A Vindication.* Rather, Shelley condemns her female characters to death, having almost none of them survive until the end of the novel. However, there are two exceptions to Shelley's portrayal of women: Walton's sister Margaret Saville, who is absent, but the only way in which Walton can relay his story of Frankenstein to the reader, and Safie, the strong-spirited adopted member of the De Lacey family. Like Shelley, Margaret is introduced to the novel as the "devout but nearly silent" recipient of Walton's letters, never actually appearing in the novel, but being present nonetheless, functioning as the conduit for the story between men to take place. From the onset, women are framed as "the listeners and readers, not the subjects and agents of stories" (Dickerson 83). As a result of there being a lack of interest of women as sexual beings or partners, we see both female and male writers of the nineteenth-century absorbing "society's stylized and constricting views of women […] thus

homosexual enthusiasm may have helped authors articulate assertions that further devalue women" (Sedgwick 211).

As an alternative to the political unfairness and gender inequity pictured above, Shelley offers the De Lacey family as an ideal, "egalitarian" role-model for society to follow (Mellor 49). In contrast to the loneliness and isolation that Victor and the creature feel from society, the De Lacey household portrays the benefits of mutual respect, rationality, and companionship. The creature observes the family closely, overhearing how they were robbed of their fortune as a result of their own kindness. The creature feels a kinship with the De Lacey family, paralleling his othered existence with the De Lacey's impoverished, unconventional lifestyle outside societal confines. Felix, the son of De Lacey, tries to rescue a Turkish merchant from being executed on unspecified political grounds, but he and his family are imprisoned instead, reducing them to "poverty and impotence" (Shelley 125). Felix cherishes Safie, daughter of the Turkish merchant, and his courage to liberate her father from political injustice starkly differs from Victor's failure to save Justine from her evil fate.

Safie seems less constrained than how the other European women are represented in the novel, thus empowering her to take control over her life by rejecting her father's manipulative, tyrannical rule and escaping the Islamic oppression of women. Raised by a Christian mother, she is told "to aspire to higher powers of intellect, and an independence of spirit," inspiring her to travel alone across Turkey and Switzerland to find the De Lacey family, seeking refuge in their welcoming, accepting nature (Shelley 123). Dickerson identifies this "maternal legacy" as the catalyst for Safie to recognize her inferior conditions and actually take the initiative in changing the outcome of her life (87). Instead of remaining under the roof of her unscrupulous father, she forgoes any security he may offer in exchange for her personal freedom and identity. Unlike the

other female "specters" of *Frankenstein*, Safie takes an active role by becoming educated in the French language and positively influencing the environment around her, as noted by the creature: "The presence of Safie diffused happiness among its inhabitants, and I also found that a greater degree of plenty reigned there" (Shelley 115). Without Safie, the creature would never have learned how to communicate effectively, causing the readers, Walton, and Victor to lose a major part of the story.

Despite Safie's independent and rebellious spirit, her greatest source of contentment comes from marrying Felix and being adopted into the De Lacey family, giving her a sense of belonging and purpose. "Safie ends by subordinating," points out Dickerson, "if not rejecting, her language for that of her lover and her new family" (90). Safie fled from a Muslim culture that values rigidity and strict gender relations, but came to a European culture with the intent of finding Felix and attaching herself to him. Although Safie and Elizabeth are very different characters, it seems they share a commonality, both desiring the companionship of their respective partners. More so than Elizabeth, Safie shares a commonality with yet another character in Shelley's novel: the creature. As a non-European woman, Safie stands out from the rest of the European women not only because of her autonomous spirit, but because of her origins from an outside country. According to the creature, the account of Safie's story was "the more moving part of [his] story" because he could identify with her foreignness and selfish father figure (Shelley 115). Like him, she arrived to De Lacey's home as a vagabond, being further separated from them because she "appeared to have no language of her own, she was neither understood by, or herself understood, the cottagers" (Shelley 116). However, Safie also serves as a stark contrast the creature with her ultimate acceptance into the De Lacey family. Even with the De Lacey's ingrained goodness, Felix cannot escape judging by appearances,

causing him to shun the creature's deformed exterior. While Felix appreciates Safie's "countenance of angelic beauty," he rejects the creature's monstrous appearance and assumes he must be evil. Safie's beauty is described as "angelic," indicating that goodness and beauty are intertwined (Shelley 115). By isolating themselves, it seems that the cottagers have escaped from Western society, yet the implication is that Felix continues to hold to its patriarchal values.

On the surface, these women are supposedly perfect, many of them actually coming from orphaned and destitute beginnings, but none of them can live up to this ideal. While this construct limits the portrayal of women, I would argue that this is part of Shelley's evaluation of the cultural and social stereotypes assigned to women. There are two parts to this critique: she is experimenting with the confines of their womanly ideal, first utilizing women's expendable status and lack of agency as a way to further the dysfunctional relationship between Frankenstein and his creation. Shelley relies on women to develop the plot of her novel, from Margaret's Saville acting as the agent of the future in *Frankenstein* to the deaths of Justine and Elizabeth perpetuating Frankenstein's desire to destroy his monster.

Secondly, Shelley's representation of women is rooted in the fact that women need to be educated with the same skills as men because their weaknesses were as a result of society training women to be so. Anne Mellor in "Possessing Nature: The Female in Frankenstein" attributes Victor's anxieties towards sexuality and the "separation of the sphere of public affection (masculine) power from the sphere of private (feminine)" (357) as significant contributing factors in the deaths of Frankenstein's women. Although Elizabeth embodies the traits of a nineteenth-century housewife, she does breach the feminine domain by taking the witness stand and giving an impassioned speech in Justine's defense. Why would Shelley give glimpses of Elizabeth's potential, only to condemn her to submission and death? Dickerson

credits Safie's survival to her refusal to be silenced by a domineering, male society: "Though the ghostly women in Frankenstein's household have great worth and potential as keepers and as ministers, such women do not survive, are in fact sacrificed, while the more active and vocal female Safie survives and lives" (90). Safie appears briefly in the novel, but her angelic, yet assertive personality causes me to wonder if women in the nineteenth century can be opinionated and independent without the fear of losing their health, family, and friends. With these feminist indications, Shelley sacrifices her female characters for the greater goal of critiquing the flawed values of a patriarchal society.

1.3 WHY DOES MR. HYDE "WEEP LIKE A WOMAN"?

In Susan Winnett's article "Coming Unstrung: Women, Men, and Principles of Pleasure," she puts it quite simply: "I would like to begin with the proposition that female orgasm is unnecessary." Not to say that orgasms are unnecessary to the woman who feels it or to the sexual experience itself, but that they are "extraneous to that culmination of heterosexual desire which is copulation" (505). Ironically, Winnett's proposal uses sex as a way to form a division between men and women, reinforcing the idea that women are not an essential part of a man's sexual experience, but there for logistical reasons, merely a means to an end. The idea of being able to separate women from sexuality, women from men plays a large role in *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* especially when considering the limited presence of women in the novella and their changing roles in nineteenth-century society.

Isolating women from sexuality was an inherent part of the Victorian ideal of womanhood, embodied by the pure, pious wife that supposedly lacked any sexual appetite. This extreme feminization came to be known as the "Angel in the House," a devoted mother and submissive wife. The Angel was passive, meek, charming, graceful, sympathetic, self-sacrificing, and pure. Esteemed historians Estelle Freedman and Carl Degler analyze a multitude of evidence in their respective works, including medical records, advice literature, legal records, and personal papers, and find that "male doctors were so convinced that women had no sexual interest that when it manifested itself, drastic measures were taken to subdue it, including excision of the sexual organs." Among these male doctors in the 1860's was Dr. William Acton who wrote in his sexual-advice book *Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs* that the "majority of women (happily for them) are not very much troubled with sexual feelings of any kind. What men are habitually, women are only exceptionally." Men's sexual desires were

acknowledged, but the common belief was that any type of indulgence of perversity, such as excessive masturbation, should be limited, or else it could case baleful effects, including mental and physical disorders (Degler 1467-68).

As a result of these societal perceptions, women were cast almost exclusively as objects, nurturers, care-takers and victims within fiction, but the political and social landscape of the nineteenth century was approaching an era of women suffrage and feminist ideologies. "Killing the Angel in the House," wrote Virginia Woolf, "was part of the occupation of a woman writer."[5] If killing the "Angel in the House" was the goal of the female writer, how did male writers respond to this redefinition of gender roles? According to Janice Doane and Devon Hodges in their critique of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, they note that moving away from the "Angel in the House" ideology implied that "terror and division threatened from within the house" the peace that the Old Woman, the formerly pliable and obedient female, offered. As a changing society surfaced, the home was no longer a sanctuary for men because it seemed that "the angel was also the demon in the house" (70).

Although women were gaining some legal rights, they still existed in a time period that valued the traditional fantasy of womanhood under a patriarchal system. During this time, there was a decline in traditional religious and moral values. The empowered status of England as the first industrialized country to dominate the economic backdrop of the nineteenth century served as a point of interest and wealth that distracted people from revolutionary and romantic principles. Among these was the contrast between perceptions of ideal womanhood versus emerging notions of the "New Woman." As an educated, sexually independent being, this

[5] This statement originates from Virginia Woolf's essay "Professions of Women," an abbreviated version of the speech she delivered before a branch of the National Society for Women's Service on January 21, 1931. Source: Thomas, Steve. "Virginia Woolf." *Virginia Woolf*. The University of Adelaide Library Electronic Texts Collection, 30 Oct. 2002. Web. 24 May 2012. <http://www.sfu.ca/~scheel/english338/Professions.htm>.

version of womanhood differed from how women were traditionally perceived: sexually repressed and marriage-driven.

In Stevenson's novella, the reaction to the New Woman, a notion which challenged women's traditional functions, was represented in a violent light. Not many women are pictured in *Strange Case*, but when they are, they are seen being powerless or hysterical in the face of man's rage. The stark contrast between the empowered, sexually liberated women of the nineteenth century and the weak, vulnerable women in Stevenson's novella implies the true fear behind the horror genre: the rebellious, sexual female threatened the stability of masculinity. In the past, Hyde's violent and insubordinate nature has been critiqued by other scholarship as a symbol of the feminists that threatened the balance of British society. I will be adding to this discussion by arguing that the lack of female presence heightens the erotic tension between the male characters in the novel, reinforcing Hyde's representation of the response to redefined gender roles.

Like Shelley, Robert Louis Stevenson privileges the male experience, leaving little room for female inclusion in his novel. In *Frankenstein,* Victor successfully detangles himself from any sexual connection from women, choosing instead to focus all his time and energy on creating his scientific masterpiece, then later spending the rest of his life consumed by its existence. Similarly, Stevenson's novel centers upon the strange dynamic between Dr. Jekyll and the villainous Mr. Hyde. When we aren't puzzling the mystery of that connection, we see that the most important relationships being formed are those between that of men, rather than those between men and women.

The women in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* appear briefly, having no real names or tangible backgrounds that make them more than shadowy accessories to the novel. Stevenson makes sure

that we form no attachment to any of these women from the nameless little girl that Hyde tramples and the hysterical maid who observes Sir Carew's murder, to Hyde's landlady and the cooks and maids that work in Jekyll's home. These women are all associated with violence; whether they are physically assaulted or completely absent from the novel, their negation altogether functions as a form of hostility. Unable to contain their hysterics or be useful witnesses when a crime has been committed, most women in Stevenson's novel are "minor female characters who are aligned with monstrosity and deviance" (Doane 69). Typically, women function as moral bedrock in most Victorian novels, embodying the beacons of wholesome, moral influence. However, this bedrock has been corrupted by Hyde's explicit threat to society, a threat which is both violent and sexual. These women fear Hyde's deviance and call attention to his presence, but beyond this, they are insignificant to the narrative as a whole. The women of Stevenson's novella, like the trampled child and Carew's maid, serve as plot devices that move the storyline forward. The only reason that the trampled child and Carew's maid are brought to the reader's attention is as a result of their interactions with Hyde, rendering the women themselves as unimportant.

By using himself as a weapon, Hyde's monstrosity is deliberately associated with his appearance and body. Hyde indiscriminately tramples over a little girl and leaves her "screaming on the ground" (Stevenson 33), reducing the little girl's family and onlookers into an angry crowd. To everyone around Hyde, he has no obvious motive for hurting the young girl; Enfield says that "the two ran into one another naturally enough" (33), as if he intended his first act of violence to be against an innocent child, a female no less. Hyde barely acknowledges the little girl, a type of dismissal towards women that will continue throughout the novel. Although he offers to pay the injured family a sum of money, he looks at the crowd "with a kind of black

sneering coolness" (34), revealing how unconcerned he is by the incident or what the general population thinks of him. He has committed this act in public, but is pressured by the reaction of the crowd to offer the family compensation; despite Hyde's disregard for society's opinion, his reaction reinforces the public space's function as an ethical barometer. Just as the violent tendencies of the creature in *Frankenstein* is fueled by his repressed desires towards his creator, Hyde functions as a narcissistic reflection of Jekyll's repressed emotions.

When Hyde attacks Sir Danvers Carew, his "ape-like fury" causes the maid to faint and lose control of her senses: "At the horror of these sights and sounds, the maid fainted" (33). Not only does Hyde use a "heavy cane" to beat his victim, but he jumps on the man and crushes him underfoot. Described by the maid-servant as "an aged, beautiful gentleman" (46), Hyde kills another innocent individual for no apparent reason. In the 1920 adaptation of *Strange Case*, Carew is introduced as the father of Jekyll's fiancée, ultimately giving Hyde a motive to kill him when he questions Jekyll's association with a fiend like Hyde. Why do the film adaptations of *Strange Case* feel that giving Jekyll a fiancée is necessary when she does not exist in the original text? Not only does she not exist in the text, but the prostitute that attempts to seduce Jekyll also does not exist. Jekyll's fiancée is safe from Hyde's inhumanity, surrounded by male protection that seeks to preserve the image of domesticity, but the prostitute, a sexual and independent being, is not afforded the same male protection and becomes a victim of Hyde's violence and lust. Even when comparing how differently the film treats Jekyll's fiancée and the seductive prostitute, these "made up" female characters essentially serve the same purpose: they are deliberately included to reinforce the film's heterosexual agenda. Although this adaptation was created after the birth of the sexual categorization "homosexual," the director feels compelled to

create a strong female presence, as seen with the creation of both "immoral" and "moral" female characters.

Rather than be allied with their male counterparts as equals or intimates, women are pictured as either flighty, weak, or "harpies" (Stevenson 34), as if they were designed specifically to be impersonal and submissive. Stevenson's novella perpetuates the idealized image of women as desexualized subjects of the nineteenth century, instead expressing any feminine energy through his male characters. The Victorian era was fixated upon sex as a central discourse of power, and the changing roles of women only increased the fascination. Stevenson creates this incoherent representation of masculinity and femininity by "subverting the identity of each" as a way to explore the interchangeability of sexuality (Doane 63). According to Jennifer Beauvais, the blurred lines between gender and sexuality was reflected by the reversal of traditional roles: "the domesticated man moves from the 'masculinized' public sphere into the 'feminized' private sphere, by engaging in feminine discourse including issues of domesticity, chastity, morality, marriage, and love" (175).

The feminine side of Stevenson's male characters suggests a redefinition of how sexuality and gender are categorized. Hyde is endowed with agency and targets women as his primary victims, but his feminine appearance and dramatic emotions challenges the traditional construct of masculinity: strength, stability, and rational. Unlike the "rugged countenance" (1) and "well-made" (44) characteristics of the other male characters, Hyde has the "pale and dwarfish" physique of a female and possesses a "mixture of timidity and boldness" (17). His impulsive behavior and dramatic emotions are described unfavorably in comparison to the dry, dignified conduct of the upper-class gentlemen; not only are his appearance and femininity linked, but there is a beastly aspect to his demeanor, emphasizing that whatever Hyde is, he is

dangerous to everyone around him. He is portrayed as "small in stature, has a quick light step with a swing, and weeps like a woman," but his othered existence gives him an "ape-like" and "savage" appearance (69, 22). When approached by Utterson, Hyde "[shrinks] back with a hissing intake of breath" (14) and "snarls" at him, suggesting that he is more animal than man. Hyde's beastliness poses a threat to everyone around him as he satisfies his innate desires through violence.

According to Doane and Hodges, the relationship between Hyde's violent tendencies and feminine traits is a literary reflection of the nineteenth century reaction to the New Woman (Doane 68). The marriage between Fanny and Robert Louis Stevenson personified the move away from traditional Victorian womanhood, as seen with Fanny's artistic ambitions and opinionated personality. According to Fanny Stevenson, she dismissed the first draft of *Strange Case* as a "quire full of utter nonsense" and had no trouble articulating her criticisms of her husband's work (Showalter 107). New Women were described as "Wild Women," connoting aversion and terror because feminist notions and independent identities threatened male power and influence. In this light, Hyde's violent and disobedient nature embodies the male fear that women suffrage and gender equality could destroy Victorian domesticity and family. As seen in the portrait *Robert Louis Stevenson and His Wife*[6] (1885) below, there is a distinct space between Stevenson and his wife. While Stevenson is one of the central aspects of this painting, Fanny is sitting in the right corner, fully covered in a gilded veil. Fit in the margins of the painting, Fanny's body is cut off and barely there, as if her presence in the painting is purely for show. This painting gives an unsettling impression of gender roles, especially with the open door that leads into another room and separates the two.

[6] Showalter, Elaine. *Sexual Anarchy*. New York: Viking, 1990. 108. Print.

Stevenson utilizes the dual nature of Jekyll and Hyde to understand the role of sexuality, but he sacrifices the female experience in order to do so. The male community represses the female identity, but this setting promotes "the exploration of masculinity, and possibly homosexuality," thus giving Stevenson an opportunity to develop a "clearer understanding of the role of public and private on issues of sexuality" (Beauvais 174). Stevenson marginalizes the presence of women because that is the reality of these men's lives: they indulge in their bachelor lifestyle and find gratification from their male-male relationships. The lack of female presence in the novel heightens the closeness between the male characters, insinuating that there is a male culture full of double lives and hidden desires that is inaccessible for women.

John Singer Sargent, *Robert Louis Stevenson and His Wife*, 1885

Whether or not Stevenson's portrayal of women was in response to his own version of "doubling and reversals in gender roles" that was occurring from within his own marriage, the story seems to convey that sex and sexuality are everywhere (Doane 67). This instability of gender roles correlates with the shifting concept of sexual identities; sexuality not only conflicts with "the norms and codes of bourgeois morality," but destabilizes the established "relations between sexes and the class hierarchies of society" (Cross 554). Stevenson uncovers the anxieties inherent in traditional gender roles, meaning that when sexuality is acknowledged

openly, it challenges “virility and masculinity’s claim to authenticity, to naturalness, to coherence—in other worlds, to dominance” (Sinatra 187). Sexuality is rendered as a dark and threatening concept, especially to the patriarchal agenda which sought to maintain traditional gender roles, such as preserving women’s inferior status and traditional function of caregiver.

> "I feel very strongly about putting questions; it partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment. You start a question, and it's like starting a stone. You sit quietly on the top of a hill; and away the stone goes, starting others; and presently some bland old bird (the last you would have thought of) is knocked on the head in his own back-garden and the family has to change their name. No, sir, I make it a rule of mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask."
>
> Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*[7]

CHAPTER 2.1 A CRISIS IN GENDER

As questions regarding sexuality materialized, there was a move from purely dismissing sexuality as a taboo to being able to explore it in terms of understanding individual and collective identities. The nineteenth century was the "age of multiplication: a dispersion of sexualities, a strengthening of their disparate forms, a multiple implantation of 'perversions'" (Foucault 37). This goes hand-in-hand with the changing perceptions towards same-sex relationships. By challenging heterosexual assumptions that control the interactions between man and man—woman and man—man and woman, nineteenth-century writers were responsible for effecting social change.

In fact, only a mere nine years after Robert Louis Stevenson published *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in 1886, Oscar Wilde was tried and convicted for his decadent lifestyle. The charges included sodomy and gross indecency under the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1885). Although the Criminal Law Amendment Act is described as "[a]n Act to make further provision for the Protection of Women and Girls, the suppression of brothels, and other purposes," it also included a section that legislated against actions that took place specifically between men. At the last minute, Henry Labouchère introduced this clause, calling for the criminalization of any type of "gross indecency" between men, whether in "public or private." Up until this time, successful prosecutions under Britain's previous sodomy law were infrequent because actual penetrative

[7] Stevenson 34.

sex had to be proven by the courts. At the time *Frankenstein* was published, sodomy was a capital offense, but convictions outside the Army and Navy were rare. However, the Labouchère Amendment made prosecuting homosexuality more enforceable, as this law was used in cases where sodomy could not be proven. With this ambiguous piece of legislation, Richard Dellmora in *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (1990) proposes that the judicial system no longer focused solely on indicting acts of sodomy, but contributed to the "social formation of homosexuality by shifting emphasis from sexual acts between men […] to sexual sentiment or thought" (200). While the wording of "indecent" is broadly employed and subjective, the text is specific in naming the acts between men. This clause sought to regulate the behavior between two participants, rather than merely specifying the deed, thus giving homophobia a legal means to prosecute homosexual males based on little evidence and loose judicial interpretations.

With a growing crisis about the interchangeability of masculinity and femininity, this amendment not only resulted in the persecution of many men, but also helped to create a specified homosexual community and resistance in many forms, including that of sexology and the Victorian passion for taxonomy (naming "sexual types"). Before the eighteenth century, being "homosexual" was not considered a fundamental part of an individual's identity, but rather an action on that person's behalf. The term "homosexuality" was not even coined until 1868, but subcultures of homosexual activity still existed for centuries, despite that laws condemned this "sinful" behavior by death (Weeks 212). Elaine Showalter (1990) ties the emergence of the modern homosexual identity with the disjointed representations of sexuality in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Showalter names this time period as "sexual anarchy" in order to explain how

traditional notions of masculinity and femininity were breaking down with the emergence of New Woman, homosexuality, and male aesthetes.

These changing attitudes towards sexuality and gender roles, from focusing on the sexual act to categorizing certain groups of individuals and forming identities, are reflected by the literature of that time period, as exemplified by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. It is important to note that the homosocial interactions in both novels, in terms how the protagonists relate to other men, are often shaped by homosexual tendencies. The term "homosocial" was formed by analogy with "homosexuality," but is distinguished by describing only the social bonds between persons of the same sex, not necessarily including any type of sexual relationship. Although the public was very interested in the implications of male-male homosocial behavior, the same type of attention was not paid to the homosocial relationships between women. While a number of case studies and legislation criticize and ban homosexual activity between men, none mentions lesbianism. Eve Sedgwick in *Between Men* observes that women are constantly giving other women attention:

> As seen with the bond of mother and daughter, the bond of sister and sister, women's friendship, "networking," and the active struggles of feminism. Women in our society who love other women, women who teach, study, nurture, suckle, write about, march for, vote for, give jobs to, or otherwise promote the interests of other women, are pursuing congruent and closely related activities. (3)

She explains that the "continuum of 'men-loving-men' and 'men-promoting-interests-of-men' does not share the same intuitive force as it does for women" because these different types of male relationships play a large part in how society operates, extending over the social, familial,

erotic, racial, and political realms (3). Sedgwick also argues that these homosocial bonds are often marked by homophobia.

Why must a fear of homosexuality be part of these relationships? The behavior of the men throughout Shelley's and Stevenson's novels is suggestive of latent homosexual desires, but they cannot breach their self-imposed silences to express these underlying emotions. Both Frankenstein's monster and Jekyll's counterpart, Hyde, ultimately become symbols of unrepressed homosexual desire, and this is reflected through various literary techniques, such as physical appearance, social disgrace, living arrangements, and relationships with their creators. On one hand, Frankenstein's creature is discriminated against based upon his grotesque appearance, and his entire existence is kept in secrecy; the fact that this progeny exists is enough to unravel the monstrous side of Frankenstein that he attempts to deny and ignore. On the other hand, Jekyll transforms both his moral and physical self into Edward Hyde, utilizing their clandestine affair as a way to externalize his erotic tensions. Jekyll's strange association with such a vile character troubles his friends, but they are unable to articulate why they find Hyde's appearance to be so disturbing, implying that Hyde looks to be common on the surface, but is set apart by his immoral quality. These interactions between creator and creation are inherently homoerotic, but why should such relationships manifest themselves as monstrous in appearance and treatment? By the end of Shelley's and Stevenson's novels, both protagonists and their creations become victims of each other's monstrosity, unable to distinguish where one ends and the other begins.

With this framework in mind, this examination will begin by looking at Shelley's Frankenstein and the undertones of homosexuality by focusing on the interactions and companionships between Frankenstein and Walton, Frankenstein and Clerval, as well as the

relationship between Frankenstein and his monster. Furthermore, I will extend the same focus to the different interactions found in Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. It is the hope of this study that by analyzing male homosocial interactions, I can begin to build evidence for the existence of unspoken homosexual desires amongst the men of these two novels. As a result of these repressed impulses, the protagonists Frankenstein and Jekyll demonstrate their desires through their monstrous creations.

> "I desire the company of a man who could sympathize with me, whose eyes would reply to mine. You may deem me romantic, my dear sister, but I bitterly feel the want of a friend. I have no one near me, gentle yet courageous, possessed of a cultivated as well as of a capacious mind, whose tastes are like my own, to approve or amend my plans."
>
> Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*[8]

2.2 HOMOEROTIC RELATIONSHIPS IN *FRANKENSTEIN*

As suggested earlier by an excerpt from Shelley's introduction to *Frankenstein*, the intimate exchanges Shelley observed in her childhood between her father and literary visitors, such as William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, and William Hazlitt, are mirrored by the male camaraderie portrayed in her novel. In *Frankenstein*, a novel written by a female author, women are not pictured as competent and strong-spirited individuals, from depictions of dying mothers and hysterical maids to being falsely accused of murder. Shelley depicts the men of *Frankenstein* as being perfectly capable without a female companion, being dependent upon their male companions for an intellectual and emotional outlet. These fraternal relationships are characterized by their continuous desire for male companionship, as seen with Frankenstein's descriptions of his childhood friend Clerval and Walton's longing for a confidante.

According to Victor Frankenstein, his friendship between Clerval formed at a young age, beginning in grade-school when Frankenstein was "indifferent" (Shelley 60) to befriending any of his other peers besides Clerval. When recalling his longtime friend to Walton, Frankenstein lists Clerval's interests and talents and affectionately describes him as "so thoughtful in his generosity, so full of kindness and tenderness" (35). Frankenstein gravitates towards Clerval's kindness and empathy because his behavior shows that he lacked so many of these sincere qualities, leading us to believe that men such as Clerval and Walton function as ideal partners for Frankenstein. Frankenstein claims that without these male-homosocial relationships, men are

[8] Shelley 19.

nothing but "unfashioned creatures" that are "half made up," therefore allowing them to justify needing these relationships in order to be complete and "perfectionate" (Shelley 23). In terms of both Shelley's and Stevenson's novels, these homosocial relationships fulfill the male characters' need for intimacy and companionship, excluding women from being able to adequately compare to these complex, deep-set relationships.

Frankenstein treasures the presence of Clerval and makes it clear that their connection is unparalleled because "nothing could equal [his] delight on seeing Clerval," not even seeing his fiancée Elizabeth (Shelley 57). Mellor describes Clerval as Frankenstein's "true soul-mate" because they share such a passionate relationship; they have come to admire and relate to one another for so long that they've mastered the art of concealing the true nature of their bond, perhaps burying it so deep that they are not even aware of the homosexual implications of their relationship (Mellor 121). While Frankenstein regards Elizabeth as sensible and intellectual, he describes his love for Clerval more eloquently, stating that he "loved [Clerval] with a mixture of affection and reverence that knew no bounds" (Shelley 60). In fact, Clerval is the only person that Frankenstein will allow to see him when he is ill, entreating Clerval to abandon his own plans and ambitions in order to keep his "disorder" concealed from everyone else. For months, they are burdened by this secret and are alone together as Clerval acts as his "only nurse" and attempts to "restore [Frankenstein] to life" by tending to him (Shelley 46). It is as if they are in an intimate partnership and Clerval has taken upon the role of caregiver, sacrificing his own needs in order to absorb the traditionally feminine task of nurturing Frankenstein's health.

While Clerval embodies the remarkable qualities of Percy Shelley that Mary admired and loved, Frankenstein serves as the foil to his more-likeable "alter-ego" (Mellor 74). According to Mellor, Mary Shelley paralleled Frankenstein with "certain elements of Percy Shelley's

temperament and character that had begun to trouble [her]," including Percy's inability to fully connect with Mary or understand the depth of her need for companionship (29). Especially after the death of her two children, Mary desperately sought Percy's comfort and companionship, but found that Percy's "egotism […] often rendered him an insensitive husband and an uncaring, irresponsible parent" (73). His selfishness strained their relationship; Mary respected and shared many of Percy's theoretical ideals and goals, but like Frankenstein, he demanded a lot from the people around him and did not fully consider how damaging his actions were to his loved ones. Percy's fantasies of a "utopian commune based on shared property and sexuality" would ultimately alienate Mary from him when he'd continually insist that his good friend Thomas Hogg initiate a sexual relationship with Mary, thus allowing him to be free of any sexual commitments to her (29). The relationship between Hogg and Percy Shelley was very open and close, especially since Hogg believed that by exploiting Percy Shelley's women in a purely sexual fashion, he could thereby create an indestructible union with Percy. Mellor quotes Richard Holmes, suggesting that the relationship between the two men was "more that of love than of friends" (Mellor).

This idea of being more than friends is reiterated in Mary Shelley's work through the interactions of Frankenstein with his close friends. In the case of Captain Robert Walton, the desire for a kindred spirit is satisfied by his newfound friend Frankenstein. In a letter to his sister Margaret, Walton states, "[…] I bitterly feel the want of a friend. I have no one near me, gentle yet courageous, possessed of a cultivated as well as of a capacious mind, whose tastes are like my own, to approve or amend my plans" (Shelley 14). Clearly, he finds himself alone in this voyage to push the boundaries of humanity in trying to find a route to the North Pole. Ironically, he is surrounded by a crew of men, but through his multiple correspondences with his sister, he

portrays a deeper side of his loneliness that is perpetuated by his decision to continue forward with his voyage, despite the inclement weather and negative outlook of his crew. After being trapped by frozen ice, the crew discovers Frankenstein dying on the ice and Walton finally finds the friend that he has craved, the friend who can relate to his voyeuristic impulses and "amend" his plans for the better. In fact, it is as a result of these mutual characteristics that Frankenstein has "suffered great and unparalleled misfortunes," as he proceeds to relate to Walton (24).

Both Walton and Frankenstein achieve a personal gratification from their friendship that they cannot reach with any woman; Walton goes as far to refer to Frankenstein as the "brother of [his] heart" (Shelley 22). The fact that Frankenstein understands him, when no other can, emphasizes their homosocial bond. Before meeting Frankenstein, Walton is in desperate need for "a friend who would have sense enough not to despise me as romantic, and affection enough for me to endeavour to regulate my mind," and Frankenstein epitomizes these traits (Shelley 14). They both share the insatiable need to explore and learn, and it is clear that Walton shares Frankenstein's disregard for putting other people's lives in danger, so long as it is for the greater good. Although these characters explicitly state their longing for male companionship, they state that they desire it in an intellectual or creative capacity, making sure to publicly remain within the lines of a conservative society.

When Frankenstein dies, Walton is wholly distraught by it, writing to Margaret, "What can I say that will enable you to understand the depth of my sorrow?" (Shelley 215). However, Walton does not merely seek the basic functions of friendship, like keeping in touch, but yearns for "the company of a man who could sympathize with me" and desires that his companion's "eyes would reply to mine" (Shelley 14). Similarly, Frankenstein portrays Clerval's physical features by utilizing romantic language, describing him as having "dark orbs nearly covered by

the lids and the long black lashes that fringed them" (Shelley 179). This practice of associate ng the human eye, or rather gaze, with romantic intentions is not unusual for literature or poetry of this time period.[9] A majority of Romantic themes centered upon mankind's connection with nature, imbuing the natural world with human characteristics such as passion and expression. In line with the Romantic aesthetics, the human eye is our ability to perceive these wonders, representing one of our clearest senses of truth. Walton utilizes erotic language when referencing his desire for a companion who could respond to him physically, and this is highly suggestive of his erotic, rather than platonic intentions. Mellor concurs that all of these physical descriptions "verge on the erotic" and emphasizes that these men respond to one another "with an ardor that seems homoerotic" (121). In fact, none of these erotic impulses are intended for women; these men do not consider women to be an opportunity for a satisfying relationship, nor do they consider women to be objects of male desire.

In essence, the central motif of Shelley's novel revolves around the preoccupation with modes of reproduction, suggesting that the male characters are disassociating themselves from the females as a way to avoid any paternal responsibility to create a family, or engage in sexual relations with a woman. This anxiety about female reproduction is what motivates Frankenstein to pursue his scientific endeavors to ensure human survival, but eliminate the necessity to have females at all in the process. His clinical and artificial laboratory environment will supersede the traditional process of reproduction altogether, creating a world that is male-oriented and no longer needs women to procreate. Frankenstein takes the woman's "source of cultural power" for himself, unwittingly creating a monster-creator relationship that "can be read as an instance of repressed homosexuality or, more precisely, as a case of the kind of homosexual narcissistic love

[9] For example, Coleridge references the eye in the *Ancient Mariner* when he describes the young man being transfixed by the Ancient Mariner's "glittering eye," implying that their unbreakable gaze serves as a way for the young man to fully connect with the mariner's story and emotions.

that Freud describes in 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality'" (Eberle-Sinatra 185). It is this type of narcissism that prevents Victor from being able to sympathize with his creation, his child, and care for it in any capacity. Frankenstein praises his knowledge as a scientist by claiming "so much has been done […] more, far more, will I achieve," revealing that the creation of Frankenstein's monster is fundamentally narcissistic as he becomes literally obsessed with his own success and drifts farther away from society (Shelley 33).

In the next section, a thorough investigation of the male-male relations in Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* continues the argument for the presence of repressed sexuality found in both novels. The heart of this work lies in examining the consequences of subverting these homosexual urges through the creation of an "Other," as represented by Frankenstein and his monster and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Ultimately, this discussion of the latent homosexuality present in Shelley's and Stevenson's novels will lead to an in-depth look at the motivations and effects of repressed sexuality and what role this plays in the discourse surrounding the changing perceptions towards sexual identities and gender roles.

2.3 Anxieties of Masculinity in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Nineteenth-century Britain was beginning to face major social and political revolutions; coupled with technological and medical advancements were laws governing sexuality and female activity. However, even with the fierce response for renewed moral codes and the purity of the family, there was a shift in how society defined the gender and sexual system. The more the control over gender roles unraveled, as seen with proliferation of sexual scandals and the rising epidemic of prostitution and sexually transmitted diseases, the more public outcry demanded "stricter border controls around the definition of gender, as well as race, class, and nationality" (Showalter 4). Not only were these ideological and economical changes affecting how women sought to be treated, but they were eroding the sexual borders between men. As Showalter confirms, the social construction of masculinity is "no more natural, transparent, and unproblematic than 'femininity'" (8). In fact, she claims the battle is no longer only between the sexes, but also lies within the sexes.

The instability of the Victorian idea of masculinity increased as men struggled to keep their ideal, patriarchal world afloat amidst the uprising of the New Woman, the degeneration of the respectable "gentleman," and the deviance from sexual norms. Even towards the latter end of the nineteenth century, there was still a "cherished belief in the separate spheres of femininity and masculinity that amounted to almost religious faith" (Showalter 8). However, these complementary, yet separate spheres were merely ideals, as William A. Cohen illustrates in *Sex Scandal: The Private Parts of Victorian Fiction*, because prostitution and pornography flourished during this age. Despite this, the political importance still held fast, as the public would be outraged by sexual secrets and scandals, not "necessarily because people *are* outraged, but because a consensus that sex ought not to be talked about in public continues powerfully to hold

sway" (Cohen 3). In fact, nineteenth-century British texts reflect the sexual stereotypes that were assigned to women and men, thus "driving fiction in contradictory directions, compelling it to generate and to prohibit discussion of sexuality," but also giving the reader a cultural context for the "clearest means of making legible these conflicting tendencies" (Cohen 3). Stevenson mirrors the men of the late Victorian era by portraying his male characters as men who dictate their lives according to strict social propriety and decorum; however, their interactions and close relationships suggest undertones of homosexuality. Elaine Showalter reads Stevenson's novel as a reaction to the emerging homosexual, calling it "a fable of fin-de-siècle[10] homosexual panic, the discovering and resistance of the homosexual self" (107). Stevenson's story utilizes Dr. Jekyll's transformation into Mr. Hyde as a literary creation of his repressed sexuality.

For example, Robert Louis Stevenson never explicitly discusses the issue of sexuality within his novel, but challenges Jekyll's security in society with the sexual threat embodied by Hyde. With the combination of Jekyll's suppression of his alter-ego and Hyde's lust for murder and chaos, Stevenson allies violence with sexuality, as seen with Hyde's brutal attacks and his inextricable relationship with Jekyll. Appearances alone imply that Hyde functions as the homosexual component of Jekyll's dual nature, his feminine and violent disposition contrasting with Jekyll's reputable position in society and masculine exterior. Stevenson explores the nature of repression and duality with the bond of Jekyll and Hyde, revealing that Jekyll seeks to separate and purify each facet of human nature, but in doing so, his darker, more repressed side begins to emerge. Jekyll confesses that "though so profound a double-dealer, I was in no sense a hypocrite; both sides of me were in dead earnest" (76), reinforcing Stevenson's belief that homosexuality was natural, as Jekyll had always been gay, but the need to create Hyde was

[10] Fin-de-siècle refers to the end of the nineteenth century in Europe, an expression which connotes a period of degeneration and decadence.

prompted by a Victorian society that would have otherwise refused him. Stevenson wants to address the ongoing issues and revolutions of nineteenth-century Britain, and does so by fixating on the male relations in his novel, including Jekyll's friends, and excluding women.

When considering the sexual overtones of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, we find that the Victorian anxieties of masculinity and homosexuality manifest themselves in Stevenson's fascination with the notion of doubling. Poet and novelist Andrew Lang describes Stevenson as an individual who "possessed, more than any man I ever met, the power of making other men fall in love with him" (Showalter 107). Whether Stevenson led his own double-life is unclear, there is no mistake that he felt compelled to explore the concept and value of identity within his writing. In his autobiographical essay "A Chapter on Dreams," Stevenson writes that he wishes "to find a body, a vehicle, for that strong sense of man's double being," especially in terms of confronting the instability of gender roles.[11] During this time, the subculture of homosexuality was maintained through secrecy and double-lives. Many men would engage in male-on-male sex when married, as exemplified by writer Oscar Wilde. There was no place for the expression of bisexuality or homosexuality in the light of day, and as a result, many men were living in a false pretense while leading completely separate lives.

The men of Stevenson's novel are abstemious and dignified, showing no outward desire for sexual appetites, violence, or great expressions of emotion, at least in the public sphere. Gabriel Utterson exemplifies the type of quiet gentlemen found in Stevenson's nineteenth century England. He embodies the Victorian ideal: Utterson is a systematic and rational individual that holds a respectable job as a lawyer. However, his overly conscientious concern with being conservative and reserved prevents him from revealing his true, vibrant personality.

[11] Quoted from "Appendix A: 'A Chapter on Dreams'" in Stevenson, Robert L, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Ed. Martin A. Danahay (Ontario: Broadview, 1999) 102.

Stevenson's men are defined by their "their strict self-denial and instinctive silence" so that they may avoid any public displays of "gross indecency," another realm of "forbidden ground" (Doane 63).

A surface observation of Utterson on his weekly walks with friend Richard Enfield shows that "they said nothing, looked singularly dull" (Stevenson 31). They seem very out of place, walking arm-in-arm, behavior that is not customary for men of that age. Furthermore, they would react "with obvious relief [at] the appearance of a friend" when in public together, as if they share a secret they do not want to be exposed (Stevenson 31). In spite of this, they considered these excursions to be the "chief jewel of each week" and made arrangements to ensure that their time together went uninterrupted. These individuals are constantly under scrutiny; they are stifling any expressions of emotions and thoughts, implying how highly protected their social persona is, even from their own latent desires.

Even when having a conversation, the characters feel obligated to follow social decorum. For example, like Jekyll, Hastie Lanyon is a practicing doctor, explaining why Jekyll revealed his transformations to Lanyon initially. When Lanyon describes to Utterson his horrific experience with Hyde, both men ultimately agree not to refer to the incident again. In fact, Utterson feels "ashamed" of his "long tongue" and does not feel comfortable speaking with Lanyon privately about their friend's issues (Stevenson 36). Their silence is not a matter of wordlessness, but a refusal to speak and give credence to the fact that an evil, or darker side, can exist within man. Later, in Jekyll's confession, there are a number of gaps and moments in his testimony where he glosses over the gruesome crimes committed by Hyde. The men repress their personalities, behaving in such a way that conversation is strained and awkward, all in order to avoid being too overindulgent or emotional, especially when around other men. Although

Utterson loves the theatre, he avoids going to the theatre and denies himself the opportunity to indulge in this hobby. Utterson is characterized as "austere with himself," but still "wonder[s], almost with envy" of others' transgressions. In Stevenson's novel, Utterson functions as a moral compass within his social circle, often being detained by hosts for his "unobtrusive company" and "sobering" presence following "the expense and strain of gaiety" (Stevenson 44). However, he deviates from his routine lifestyle in order to pursue the mystery behind Dr. Jekyll's disappearance which suggests that he craves adventure, or the ability to break free of social constraints.

Self-imposed repression rules how Stevenson's characters exist and interact with one another. Despite being a naturally curious man, Enfield suppresses his inquisitive nature regarding Jekyll's experiments, claiming that he "make[s] it a rule of [his]: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less [he] asks" (Stevenson 35). Hyde's residence at "Queer Street" makes Enfield uncomfortable, and he admits to feeling the need to censor what he says or asks in order to avoid receiving any controversial answers in return. Even the butler Poole notices that there is "something queer" about Hyde, further reinforcing a negative connotation with the word "queer." In fact, "Queer Street" already had a shifty designation of being an imaginary street outside respectable society, a place "where people in difficulties are supposed to reside" (Oxford English Dictionary Online). According to a number of scholars, the homosexual significance of "queer" had entered the English vernacular by the 1900's, suggesting that Hyde is not only doing something questionable, but living in a social evil (Showalter 112). The fact that Enfield explicitly stays quiet about Hyde's private affairs implies that there is a culture of silence among men that compels them to defend the current system which privileges men, no matter how flawed it may be. Even though they are concerned about Jekyll's erratic behavior and Hyde's violent

tendencies, these men are still hesitant to interfere and ask those questions that reveal unsightly truths.

These men choose to be single and show no interest in interacting with women, instead seeking comfort and companionship from each other. All of these men possess admiration and respect for one another, but their relationships are rooted much deeper than that. Although such bonds between men are not unusual for the Victorian period, they prioritize these close-knit relationships so highly that any female involvement is excluded. Outside of Jekyll's tumultuous relationship with Hyde, he does not express an attachment to anyone besides his "sincere and warm affection" for Utterson (Stevenson 44). Why aren't any of these men pursuing any type of romantic relationships with women? Many scholars, including Showalter, are not surprised by the absence of female presence in this male-oriented novel (108). Stevenson, writes Elaine Showalter, has rendered a story "about communities of men […] the romance of Jekyll and Hyde is conveyed through men's names, men's bodies, and men's psyches" (107).

In fact, these homosocial relationships serve as the main obstruction to any of the men in the novel from forming any lasting relationships with women. As seen in both *Frankenstein* and *Strange Case*, the characters are "all middle-aged bachelors who have no relationships with women except as servants" (Showalter 108). By shunning any relationships with women, these men are able to avoid any patriarchal obligation to create and maintain a nuclear family. They are not bound to their prescribed roles of husband, father, and source of income, but instead choose to develop intense solidarity with men. There is an unstated, yet clear societal pressure upon men, to focus on their obligations to a conventional society and fulfill their roles within nuclear families. While Hyde acts as a way for Jekyll to indulge his true self and break from society's strict hold on morality, these men choose to externalize their homoerotic desires by

surrounding themselves entirely with men who "mirror each other [with] bonds [that] are homosocial and homoerotic" (Doane 67). Throughout Stevenson's novel, his characters participate in loaded exchanges and are forced to unravel the secret of Mr. Hyde, thus embodying the Victorian struggle to acknowledge the ambiguity of homosexuality, the hidden side of the nineteenth century's patriarchy.

"But time began at last to obliterate the freshness of my arm; the praises of conscience began to grow into a thing of course; I began to be tortured with throes and longings, as of Hyde struggling after freedom; and at last, in an hour of moral weakness, I once again began compounded and swallowed the transforming draught […] My devil had been long caged, he came out roaring."

Robert Louis Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*[12]

2.4 Repercussions of Frankenstein's and Jekyll's Hideous Progenies

In many ways, Frankenstein's creation and Jekyll's alter-ego are each a patchwork of scientific genius, being both humane and inhumane as they interlock, yet disrupt the boundaries between oppositional categories. Their hideous progenies are discarded as creatures that go against nature, refusing to conform to the everyday standard by standing out and acting impulsively, but I would argue that there is another aspect of their existences that scares Frankenstein and Jekyll more: these creatures are physical manifestations of their repressed sexuality and subdued desires. In both novels, the authors examine the notion of doubling, juxtaposing their upstanding, scientific protagonists against shunned, monstrous beasts as a way of investigating the differing reactions to sexuality and gender. Both protagonists are characterized by their simultaneous desire and revulsion of their respective monsters, from the moment of conception to death of creator and creation alike. Stephen Heath claims that the "random violence replaces the sexual drive" (93-4), identifying the threat of Frankenstein's and Jekyll's creations as a direct result of denying baser urges.

Mary Shelley presents a challenge to readers through her literary work by creating a living being from deconstructed human remains, an undifferentiated creature with no sense of self or connection to the world around him. She utilizes the literary foil of the monster as the physical manifestation of Frankenstein's repressed sexuality, proposing that the creature symbolizes everything that Frankenstein must deny himself according to social standards.

[12] Stevenson 84.

Frankenstein completely devotes himself to creating life, physically becoming "pale with study" and "emaciated with confinement" (Shelley 52). He allows everything else, including his friends, family, studies, and social life, to slip away in exchange for this rare opportunity to create a being which would function as a source of happiness, but be in debt to him. Frankenstein essentially cuts off communication with anyone for two years, finding no pleasure in reading letters from home, but only being sustained by his maniac energy as he's seemed "to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit" (Shelley 52). Driven by his single-minded pursuit, he is unfazed by the potential hazard of what he's doing, instead allowing his "passion [and] transitory desire to disturb [his] tranquility" (40). His passionate devotion to this scientific experiment can be described as sexual as he substitutes any heterosexual attachment for Elizabeth for his homosexual obsession with his monster.

Shelley depicts the construction of the monster as an illicit affair, evoking images of masturbation as she describes how Frankenstein used his "profane fingers" in a "solitary chamber" that houses his "workshop of filthy creation" (Shelley 53). Frankenstein expresses guilt over his erotic impulses because his "heart often sickened at the work of [his] hands," but his fixation with the creature's consummation prevents him from stopping (Shelley 163). This erotic language suggests that the creature is an embodiment of Frankenstein's repressed sexuality, thus explaining why Frankenstein struggles between his repulsion and fascination with the monster. Michael Eberle-Sinatra agrees that the masturbatory elements in the making of the creature are indicative the homoerotic dimensions of the relationship between the Frankenstein and his monster.

Even Frankenstein seems somewhat aware of how this obsession is destroying him, but he is too immersed in his pursuit to the point that his energy becomes demonic. It's ironic that

"breathless horror and disgust filled [his] heart" at the completion of his project, when it took his own monstrous energy and focus to create such a being. He's appalled by his own ambition, finding that "the labors of men of genius, however erroneously directed" have been realized, and he is unprepared to accept the implications of what the monster represents and needs from him (Shelley 55, 46). Frankenstein's eagerness to "not learn all things indiscriminately," such as preferring the "secrets of heaven and earth" (Shelley 34) over understanding languages, government and politics has thwarted him from being mentally or morally equipped for the responsibilities of caring for another, of parenthood. While he understands the body with perfection, he lacks the upbringing and education that would help him sympathize with the monster and understand the emotional and spiritual position of his creation.

Frankenstein's repulsion towards the monster's ugliness further emphasizes his refusal to acknowledge deeper truths about himself and his inadequacies. When Frankenstein is subject to the monster's "unearthly ugliness [which] rendered it too horrible for human eyes," he immediately denies any association with his hideous progeny (Shelley 97). He is unable to reconcile the reality of what he has produced and how closely he is linked to this grotesque-looking being. In Frankenstein's attempt to align with society and, therefore, reject the monster, he embodies homophobic traits as he is forced to reject himself. While Frankenstein is limited by his social obligations, the creature has no accountability to anyone but himself and spends most of its time acting out Frankenstein's stifled desires against a civilized society which rejects the perverse. Frankenstein claims that the creature is his "own spirit let loose from the grave," yet he is "forced to destroy all that was dear to me" as he seeks to terminate the creature's existence (Shelley 75). Why can't he accept this creature? Is his rejection purely based upon the creature's unsightly appearance? I would argue that Frankenstein's aggressive pursuit of the creature lies in

his knowledge that the creature is a symptom of the monstrosity that lurks within Frankenstein, thus enabling the dual pursuit of one another.

Up until Frankenstein's demise at the end of Shelley's novel, he is consumed by his search for the monster. Frankenstein outwardly seeks retribution for the crimes the creature committed, but the tension between the two results from the threat of the monster being an implicitly sexual one towards Frankenstein. Sensing this, Frankenstein pursues the creature in a feeble attempt to eliminate the only evidence of his repressed sexuality. Initially, he describes the monster as "beautiful" and emphasizes his role in hand-picking every physical aspect of this creature, implying that he instinctively desires the same creature that he will later deny. Frankenstein is repulsed by the life he has created, but he is strangely drawn to it, stating that he "desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation" (57).

Frankenstein manipulates the power of reproduction by creating a male monster through the technologies of science. Instead of impregnating Elizabeth and procreating with a female, he is compelled to manufacture an alternative, choosing to "collect the instruments of life around [him, so] that [he] might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at [his] feet" (Shelley 55). Even the vague wording of the mechanics of scientific creation—"infuse a spark" and collecting "instruments of life"—implies that Frankenstein is ignorant to what exactly the sexual process entails. Frankenstein restrains himself from explicitly narrating the gritty details of this private experiment, but makes it clear that this process involves only men. The creature is the product of an unnatural union, a union which negates the reproductive function of women, and therefore places sexual overtones upon the creature's creation and existence. Frankenstein fails to associate females, even Caroline Beaufort or Elizabeth, with the power of reproduction, and repossesses it entirely.

With Elizabeth's death, Frankenstein is denied the opportunity to procreate in a traditional manner. However, Frankenstein avoids any confrontations with his sexuality on his wedding night by leaving Elizabeth in order to pursue the creature. Frankenstein is well aware of the dangers of leaving Elizabeth alone, yet chooses to patrol the premises instead of protecting her. Even when her life is threatened, Frankenstein is consumed by the whereabouts of his monstrous counterpart: "I continued for some time walking up and down the passages of the house and inspecting every corner that might afford a retreat to my adversary […] when suddenly I heard a shrill and dreadful scream" (Shelley 192). Unfortunately, Elizabeth's status as Frankenstein's "beloved" betrothed does not afford her safety as she becomes a pawn in the game of wits between Frankenstein and the creature, and a mere tool for revenge.

While Frankenstein's monster has caused a lot of pain and unhappiness with his attacks, he is not acting alone in these harmful transgressions. In fact, the creation of the monster reveals what happens when the female part of reproduction is eliminated. The monster embodies Frankenstein's subdued sexual desires and attacks the patriarchal society which rejects him, leading to numerous deaths and revealing that "the separation from the public realm of feminine affections and compassion has caused much of this social evil" (Mellor 117). Somewhere along the way, Frankenstein loses sight of his humanity and fails to realize that he and the monster are more alike than he would like to admit. Even the creature claims that his deformed self represents a "filthy type" of his creator, being even "more horrid even from the very resemblance," indicating that the creature functions as the living form of Victor's repressed issues (Shelley 130). As the creature's thinking "progresses from meaning of his body to questions of identity," he attempts to make sense of his purpose (Cross 554). We witness the systematic destruction of his childish innocence and trust as he attempts to educate himself in

various philosophies and lessons. The creature claims that his wretched existence lies below that of Satan, who at least "had his companions" while the creature is "solitary and abhorred" (Shelley 130).

In addition to this, Frankenstein's refusal to create a female companion for the creature contrasts starkly to his eagerness to create a male creature, implying that he fears sexuality, particularly female sexuality. When Frankenstein destroys the female body that he has begun to build, it is a violent mutilation that reinforces his fervent need to control and destroy any representation of sexuality. He does not merely end his work with the female body, but is "trembling with passion [as he] tore to pieces the thing on which [he] was engaged" (Shelley 165). One of Frankenstein's biggest concerns with the creation of a female companion includes the fear of procreation as he is inflicted by premonitions that he would be responsible for "a race of devils [that] would be propagated upon earth" (Shelley 164). By claiming that the destruction of the female body was for the greater good, Frankenstein is able to justify to himself the necessity of killing this female being.

Conversely, the prospect of his monsters forming a union, one that would parallel Frankenstein's own marriage with Elizabeth, paralyzes Victor with fear. This is the most extreme expression of his anxiety of engendering a female progeny, prompting him to destroy her. However, he had months to contemplate this and terminate her, so why would he choose to do it right before she was animated? By destroying the monster, he ensures that destruction will be wrought upon Elizabeth, as promised, on their wedding night. This disturbing form of self-sabotage ensures that Frankenstein will not only get to see his monster, but utilize his monster as a way to escape his sexual obligations to Elizabeth.

According to Richard Sha in *Romanticism and the Sciences of Perversion*, Frankenstein's usage of science to create life negates the role of sexuality by separating function from pleasure. By "removing reproductive function, or purpose, from their sexuality" (43), Frankenstein is able to address his fear of female sexuality by riding the necessity of it completely through asexual reproduction. Shelley's characters attempt to uphold the heterosexual patriarchal order, but Frankenstein's repressed sexuality wreaks havoc on society, revealing the consequences of muting one's physical desires or identity in exchange for maintaining social competence.

Dr. Jekyll's motivations for creating a "monster" are very similar to that of Victor Frankenstein. Robert Louis Stevenson utilizes the dual identities of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde as a way to show that without any healthy outlets for our sexual appetites, humankind will succumb to destruction and violence. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the homosexual community had "evolved into a secret but active subculture with its own languages, styles, practices, and meeting places," indicating that homosexuality represented a double-life led by a part of the male population during this time-period (Showalter 108). Like many men of this time period, Jekyll represses certain desires or thoughts that are linked to his sexuality in order to preserve his position in society. While Dr. Jekyll seeks to be a somber man, he admits that he was "committed to a profound duplicity of life" by keeping the pleasurable, sinful side of his personality hidden from society (Stevenson 76).

Jekyll finds it very important to uphold his well-respected façade, even at the expense of isolating himself from society in order to hide the materialization of Mr. Hyde. Although Jekyll has developed a close relationship with Utterson, he still cannot reveal the truth behind his

withdrawn behavior. When confronted by Utterson about his erratic behavior and break from Lanyon, Jekyll responds in a letter:

> I mean from henceforth to lead a life of extreme seclusion; you must not be surprised, nor must you doubt my friendship, if my door is often shut even to you. You must suffer me to go my own dark way. I have brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name. If I am the chief of sinners, I am the chief of sufferers also. I could not think that this earth contained a place for sufferings and terrors so unmanning; and you can do but one thing, Utterson, to lighten this destiny, and that is to respect my silence. (56)

Unknown to Utterson, Jekyll has consumed a solution which causes his transformation into the murderous villain Mr. Hyde. In this letter, he makes it clear that he is struggling with darker parts of himself that requires himself to completely withdraw from any social interactions. By evoking the contrast of dark versus light, Jekyll is referring to his alter-ego's representation of his secrecy, his homosexuality. He self-proclaims himself both the "chief of sinners [and] the chief of sufferers" as he both activates and resists the homosexual threat of Hyde. Jekyll is unable to curb his conversions into Hyde, so he feels the need to quarantine the deviant in his home as way to protect society from his darker identity. Jekyll locks himself in his home, literally hiding his transgressions behind closed doors, and makes it clear that his rejection of baser urges has immutable consequences.

With the death of Sir Danvers Carew and Jekyll's erratic behavior, Utterson feels even more compelled to pursue the mystery of Hyde. He becomes obsessed with saving Jekyll from this monster as he takes the initiative in investigating the mystery behind Mr. Hyde. Initially described as being a predictable and logical man, Utterson begins to act impulsively by stalking

Hyde and interrogating various people in regards to his whereabouts, impassioned with learning the circumstances behind Jekyll's will, in which he bequeaths all his possessions to Hyde: "If he could but once set eyes on him […] [h]e might see a reason for his friend's strange preference or bondage (call it which you please) and even for the startling clauses of the will" (Stevenson 16). Showalter describes Utterson, along with the rest of the characters in the novel, as "enslaved" to the ambiguity of Hyde. Utterson imagines a scene in Jekyll's bedroom against a backdrop of homoerotic implications. While Jekyll is sleeping contentedly in his bed, Hyde would enter and coax him to "rise and do its bidding" (Stevenson 39). Utterson imagines this scene taking place in the bedroom, a designated place for any type of sexual encounters to take place. Hyde is pictured as Jekyll's lover in this fantasy, trespassing at the "dead hour" in order to part the curtains and rendezvous with his counterpart.

Stevenson's investigation of duality through the split of his characters Jekyll and Hyde proposes that their polar opposite traits results from Hyde acting out Jekyll's suppressed desires. The connection between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde represents the inextricable link between civilized and savagery, between repressed and unleashed. With the emergence of Hyde, Jekyll asserts that his actions were not hypocritical because "man is not truly one, but truly two" (76). Jekyll's internal struggle to deal with Hyde's presence and his past transgressions leads him to believe that all humans possess dual natures, both components of "good" and "bad." There is a side of Jekyll that is not congruent with what society deems worthy, and this gives way to the existence of Hyde, a physical manifestation of a part of Jekyll's identity.

In the literal sense, Jekyll and Hyde are characterized as having vastly different physical appearances. Since Jekyll has attempted to live a virtuous life, he possesses eye-pleasing qualities: he is "a large, well-made, smooth-faced man of fifty, with something of a slyish cast

perhaps, but every mark of capacity and kindness" (44). He is described as "handsome" and has a body that is more harmoniously proportioned than Hyde's. Although Jekyll is initially stronger, Hyde slowly permeates Jekyll's entire existence as he gains greater control over his mental and physical stature. Since Hyde functions as the hateful, evil parallel to Jekyll, he is pictured as pale, animal-like, and dwarfish. However, any characters that come into contact with him are unable to articulate the horror of his appearance, as exemplified by Enfield:

> He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary-looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No, sir; I can make no hand of it; I can't describe him. And it's not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment. (44)

Jekyll's strange association with such a vile character troubles his friends, but they are unable to express why they don't like him. He appears common on the surface, but is set apart by his perverted quality. These men consider Hyde's appearance and nature to be unspeakable, and they cannot even voice, or pinpoint the physical anomalies that make Hyde so detestable. Showalter writes that Hyde's association with monstrous and grotesque imagery is not coincidental because his association with images of "disgust, fear, and loathing are suggestive of the almost hysterical homophobia of the nineteenth century" (Showalter 112). He is comparable to a disease, similarly to how homosexuality was characterized in that time period. Men who were "afflicted" with homosexuality were considered destructive, participating in criminalized acts that threatened traditional Britain's social, economic, and scientific values.

Despite abhorring what Hyde has done, in terms of harming others, Jekyll admits that Hyde has a freeing effect on him: "I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy" (Stevenson 60). These "sensual images" indicate that Jekyll is able to experience his emotions in their entirety, uninhibited by society, through the creation of Hyde. Jekyll even admits to his worst fault being that he possessed a "certain gaiety of disposition," recalling that he had to "conceal [his] pleasures though he was fascinated by his "profound" discovery (Stevenson 78). As Jekyll digs further into the implications of what releasing Hyde really means about his humanity, Jekyll discovers that Hyde symbolizes everything that Jekyll must deny himself according to confines of society. The author suggests that the outwardly respectable Dr. Jekyll has entertained ideas of vice and secret desires, but seeks to maintain his respectable reputation and leave behind his wild youth. Jekyll's conflict between his need for respectability and what he secretly desires is manifested through his moral and physical transformation into Hyde: "This [Hyde], too, was myself. It seemed natural and human […] it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine" (Stevenson 79). Jekyll wants to rid himself of any former temptations, so much that he never actually voices what these secret desires and vices even are.

While Jekyll fears and loathes his underlying desires, Hyde acts instinctively and asserts himself freely. However, Jekyll claims that he will "suffer smartingly in the fires of abstinence" if he rids himself of Hyde, reinforcing that he recognizes the "sinful" nature of his thoughts and actions, but would prefer having Hyde rather than not (Stevenson 66). Jekyll envies this liberation from societal restraints, finding himself drawn to suppressed erotic desires, physicality and sensuality. While Jekyll is chained to the civilizing influences of society and religion, Hyde

is not bound to any of these fetters. Stevenson has created a monster that embodies the tensions of a society which seeks to repress any type of homoerotic relationships. Hyde's actions complicate Jekyll's efforts to keep his double life a secret, but he ultimately realizes that however evil and "primitive" Hyde is, Jekyll is "radically both" (Stevenson 77). While Utterson felt that Jekyll was hiding a strange behavior or something dark from the outside world, Jekyll recognized Hyde's presence as a feature of his identity, however evil Hyde may be. As the portrayed by everyone that comes into contact with Hyde, he is defined as a sinister, evil individual that does not abide to societal expectations. As Jekyll's repressed alter-ego, he manifests any homosexual tendencies, but is rendered as violent and monstrous, implying that homosexuality is perceived as a threat to the heterosexual agenda of the patriarchal society.

CONCLUSION

The perverse gratification that comes from indulging in taboo subjects has engrossed both writers and readers over the centuries, producing numerous stories which address the tempting themes of sexuality and gender, whether directly or in coded terms. A paradox existed where there were certain expectations for how women and men were supposed to behave in and out of the bedroom, reinforcing the separation between the feminine and masculine spheres. There were a number of ways to reinforce normative morality, marriage being promoted as one way to protect oneself against the rising epidemic of venereal diseases and decadence.

The heart of Stevenson and Shelley's masterful yet subdued discourse on changing perceptions towards sexuality lies in the homosocial relationships, portrayal (or lack thereof) of women, and the existence of a supernatural creation or alter-ego. With *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the reader sees an ambiguity in the final scene, causing the reader to question whether Jekyll was the one who actually committed suicide. In *Frankenstein*, the creature catches up with his creator, but finds that he is too late and is left to reflect upon his miserable existence: "I am alone." Both Jekyll and the Frankenstein are forced to isolate themselves from society, thus implying that there is a maddening, negative connotation associated with trying to undo the respectable, masculine façade so characteristic of nineteenth century men. These characters are taught to repress instinctive emotions and desires, which drive them to create abstract prisons governed by decorum and reputation. These immoral factors of non-hetero sexual identities and changing gender roles are presented as direct challenges to the overarching patriarchal system. In fact, even Percy Shelley stated his uncertainties regarding "the purpose for which the sexual instinct are supposed to have existed" (Sha 43), also proposing that sex is independent of pleasure and giving it no utilitarian function. By creating a male monster, Frankenstein is

rejecting human reproduction, and therefore, traditional sexuality by usurping the role of women. In accordance with Percy Shelley, just as sexual reproduction has no other purpose than to procreate, perhaps the function of women is as equally limited. In Mary Shelley's novel, she not only explores a world that subverts women and female creation, but incorporates it into the structure of her novel: it takes Victor approximately nine months to create the creature and Walton nine months to complete his journey. Frankenstein successfully creates his creature, but there is something to be said about the fact that he not only fails to replace women, but causes an ego-centric, self-consuming world that leads to chaos and destruction.

The public feared for the downfall of society and its proper standards, but it seems that the only ones to suffer were those who followed their wicked passions beyond the safety of British bourgeois and to their ends. In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the emergence of Hyde results from Jekyll's hypocrisy and inability to purge his sexual drive. In the end, Hyde is destroyed, implying that Jekyll revealed his true nature for a short while, but eventually the homosexual threat is eliminated and London society returned to quaint suppression. Even though this novel flirts with different kinds of transgressions, Victorian readership would interpret this novel as supporting the restoration of normative sexual identities and roles. However, the fact remains that Stevenson was unafraid to invent such a controversial character and bring these issues to light. Just as the destructive and unapologetic nature of Hyde struck fear in the hearts of Stevenson's novel, he utilizes Hyde as the perfect opportunity to embody the ideal, violent feminists who frightened England's nineteenth century gentlemen: the New Women.

Mary Shelley and Robert Louis Stevenson produced novels that explore the psychological complexity of duality, of creating an "other" to embody the implied conflict as a way to investigate the consequences of homosexuality. By demonizing and dehumanizing Mr.

Hyde and Frankenstein's monster, Stevenson and Shelley were able to establish the conditions for an "other" experience: defining the creator as superior and the creation, the other as inferior, thus determining the life experience and status of these socially subordinate creatures. In order to fully investigate the radical divisions within the self, Stevenson and Shelley needed a way to physically manifest this and bring these repressions to the page.

The portrayal of the relationship between gender and sexuality in their novels has a larger, cultural significance within the context of the nineteenth century, inspiring other writers in the 1880's and 1890's, such as Henry James, George Meredith, George Gissing, Marie Corelli, and others to "write about what they feared and desired: a transgression of the boundaries of masculine and feminine identity" (Doane 73). Stevenson's and Shelley's novels were only the beginning to addressing how society's perceptions are firmly anchored in the conventional understanding of gender identity and its incongruous relationship with sexuality. The history of attitudes towards sex and sexuality is a cultural process that can be evaluated through the literature of an era, giving us a way to envision the shifts taking place in the gender and sex system and reflect upon how these lingered into the twentieth century and continue to inform our own modes of sexuality and the world in which we live.

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